



CALPEEK

CALIFORNIA POLITICAL WEEK

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CALPEEK'S March 5 Calif. Primary Preview

Editor's note: In this final issue prior to the Mar. 5th Calif. primary, **Calpeek** will cover some general trends; and update all of the key Demo & GOP statewide, U.S. House and Calif. Legislative primary contests, as well as update the key ballot propositions. And we will also update some hot local contests...

The naysayers, wimps and goody goody types deplore negative ads, but they do work and we love to see the dirt fly because politics is a *contact sport*. And always remember this: *one man's smear is another man's fact sheet...*

CAMPAIGN TRENDS

◆ **Voter Registration** – As of the close of registration on Feb. 4th, there were 21,492,109 eligible Calif. voters. Of that number, 15,232,154 (or 70.87%) are registered to vote in the Mar. 5th primary. About 45.1% of all registered voters are Demos, 35.0% are GOPers, 5.2% are registered in minor political parties and 14.7% are declined to state. A DTS voter may cast a ballot in either the Demo or GOP primary...

◆ **Voter Turnout** – There's no doubt that voter turnout will be low, but how low??? Some sources think it will be between 35-37% of those eligible to vote. The lower the turnout, the more *conservative* the vote...

...FYI: If the turnout is around 40% or better, one source told **Calpeek** it won't have anything to do with last minute voter interest, but rather that county registrars over the past 4 years have done a good job in *purging the voter rolls* (removing those people who have moved or died). The purging of the rolls provides a higher percentage turnout...

◆ **Polling** – We're into that old debate once again about pollsters who use random digit dialing (Field, PPIC, L.A. Times) vs. voter file (the political pollsters). With the voter file method, the pollster already knows who is a likely voter. The problem with an RDD sample in a low turnout election is respondents aren't always truthful as to whether they're going to vote...

◆ **Slates** – Will the slates once again prove to be the key factor in winning down-ballot statewide primary contests? In 1998 slates played a big part in the low-profile down-ballot GOP primaries. The slates don't seem to be as effective in the Demo primaries...

◆ **Negative Campaigns** – Negative campaign ads, whether mail, radio, outdoor or tv, won't work unless they're believable.

GOVERNOR'S RACE

...The fur is flying in the GOP primary between Richard Riordan and Bill Simon Jr. New negative tv ads have been appearing daily – mostly by Riordan, but some by Simon too. The hits against Simon range from his business dealings to his record of not voting, but also include a charge that Simon too has given money to Demos. CA SOS Bill Jones is out of the running, according to most **Calpeek** sources. Here's the latest polling from the L.A. Times & the Field Poll. Both polls used likely voters...

	<u>L.A. Times</u>	<u>Field Poll</u>
Riordan	31%	31%
Simon	31%	37%
Jones	14%	9%
Undecided	24%	23%

...The L.A. Times wisely decided to also test different turnout scenarios: in a *lower turnout model*, Simon wins: 29% vs. 26%, with Jones at 11% and 32% undecided. In a *higher turnout model*, Riordan wins: 33% vs. 31%, with Jones at 13% and 19% still undecided. The private polling shows almost the same thing: Simon *even* or *slightly ahead* of Riordan, with Jones trailing badly in 3rd place...

...One month ago, the former L.A. Mayor held a 14-point lead over Simon in the Jan. 23-27 L.A. Times poll – and held an even wider lead in the Field Poll (taken at the same time): 46% vs. 13% each for Simon and Jones. So what caused the huge Riordan *meltdown*? 1) According to GOP consultant Arnie Steinberg (writing in the San Diego Union Tribune), Riordan has taken the primary for granted – “He assumed he would win handily,” Steinberg said; 2) \$6-7 million in negative tv ads by Demo Gov. Gray Davis – hitting Riordan with his own words on abortion and then attacking RR's character by saying, “Is this a man we can trust?”; 3) Several self-inflicted wounds, such as trashing former Gov. George Deukmejian – which may turn out to be the single biggest mistake by RR...

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... Who wins this GOP primary ??? Some Calpeek sources say RR holds on to win narrowly; others called it a toss-up. Two sources thought RR was in danger of losing to Simon. Simon is now running a very focused race, while Riordan is scrambling. Finally, remember New Jersey. In that primary of 2001, the GOP establishment tried to force a moderate on the GOP base. Moderate Bob Franks lost to conservative Bret Schundler...

CONTROLLER

...On the Demo side, it's BOE member Johan Klehs vs. deep pocketed dot.com businessman Steve Westly. The new L.A. Times poll gives Westly a big lead: 36% vs. 10%, with 54% still undecided. The key difference: Westly has been on tv for 3 weeks with a solid buy. The biggest problem for Klehs: his BOE office is a poor fundraising base and few voters know what the BOE does. Our sources all say the same thing: Westly wins...

...On the GOP side, the primary battle between BOE member Dean Andal and State Sen. Tom McClintock has gotten somewhat testy. They're trying to outdo each other on who's the biggest anti-tax fighter. They are equal, but Andal's mailer to 1 million GOP homes hitting McC on some of his legislative votes has McC seeing red. Both are on tv; both have slate cards (although Andal may have a slight edge here); and we've heard some Andal radio in L.A. But the new L.A. Times poll shows McC out in front with 25% vs. 13% for Andal and 18% for two others in the race, with 44% undecided. Most Calpeek sources rate McC as a slight favorite, with a few still seeing this race as a toss-up...

INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

...Although there's a hot Demo primary between former IC John Garamendi, former White House deputy drug czar Tom Umberg and Assemblyman Tom Calderon, for reasons unknown, the L.A. Times did not poll this primary. But Field did. It shows Garamendi at 22%, Calderon 13%, Umberg 9%, Bill Winslow 8% and undecided at 48%. Most of our sources give the nod to Garamendi. The endorsements are split and all are up on tv. The Calderon spot is different (signing w/voice over, but these spots have the feel of a PSA rather than a political ad). The best thing about Umberg's ad is the endorsement of consumer advocate Erin Brockovich. More Erin, less Umberg. Both Umberg and Garamendi are bashing Calderon for taking donations from insurance companies. This race is another test of name ID (Garamendi) in race which is having a tough time getting coverage...

...On the GOP side, former L.A. Deputy Mayor Gary Mendoza has bought most all the slates. Wes Bannister has some residual name ID (he ran in '90 & '94), while Stefan Stitch is running a grassroots campaign. Again, this particular primary will be a test of slate power. The Field Poll shows Mendoza with 19%, Bannister with 11%, Stitch with 13% and undecided at 57%...

SECRETARY OF STATE

...There's usually one good upset in every primary and this may be where it happens. In the new L.A. Times survey, former SOS March Fong Eu leads both Michela Alioto and Assembly Majority Leader Kevin Shelley by a hefty margin: Eu 29% vs. 12% for Alioto vs. 9% for Shelley, with 48% still undecided. Shelley is on most of the key slates, has won most all of the major endorsements and has a solid tv buy. The ads are just so-so. Most sources say Eu wins and that it's a pure test of name ID in a low turnout primary. But there are a few who believe (and hope) that Shelley will pull an upset...

...On the GOP side, former Assemblyman Keith Olberg is fighting for survival in the new L.A. Times survey. The ex Victorville lawmaker has 15% vs. 13% for attorney Mike Schaefer vs. 10% voter rights activist Barbara Jean Marr. A huge 62% are undecided. Olberg is on most all of the key GOP slates, so this will be another test of slate power...

STATE TREASURER

...Incumbent Phil Angelides(D) is waiting to see who wins the GOP primary: former PUC commissioner and CPA Greg Conlon or businesswoman/former Deputy State Tres. Mary Toman. Few insiders really have a clue, because this primary is getting no attention from either the GOP establishment or the news media. Toman and Conlon are both pumping personal funds into this contest. Conlon won the BEE's endorsement; Conlon got the S.F. Chron. The difference: Toman has bought most of the key GOP slates. Again, a test of slate power. Our sources rate the primary as a toss up...

BALLOT MEASURES

■ **Prop. 40** – This is the \$2.6 billion Clean Water, Clean Air etc. bond measure. When voters are told about the pros and cons of this measure, the L.A. Times survey gives it a win: 64% YES vs. 27% NO, with 9% undecided. But Calpeek sources are not so sure 40 wins. In a low turnout election, with a heavy conservative turnout, our sources think Prop. 40 could be in trouble – at best it's a toss up...

■ **Prop. 41** – This is the \$200 million bond measure to provide money for counties to buy new voting machines. Calpeek sources are split on whether Prop. 41 passes...

■ **Prop. 42** – All bets are off, now that there's a solid NO on Prop. 42 tv blitz. It was a last minute hit, with big bucks being thrown into this effort by CTA and SEIU. This measure requires that sales tax on gasoline be used for transportation purposes. CTA & SEIU want the money to remain unmarked in the general fund for any purpose – not just transportation. YES on 42 supporters were warned early that they'd better raise some big buck, just in case this last minute ambush took place. The YES on 42 side had a warchest of about \$5 million and sources think that NO on 42 may match that. Toss-up...

■ **Prop. 45** – This is the initiative which would extend *term limits*. According to the new *L.A. Times* poll, likely voters are split 43% FOR vs. 43% AGAINST, with 14% undecided. Among Calpeek sources, most all said 45 would be defeated. YES on 45 is spending heavily on tv and radio, but the NO side has been up on tv too...

U.S. HOUSE RACES

☒ **18th CD** – U.S. Rep. Gary Condit(D-Ceres) was a recent guest on CNN's Larry King Show, but no new ground was broken. He's still in denial about the Chandra Levy affair. As far as Condit is concerned, he's not running against Assemblyman Dennis Cardoza(D-Modesto), but against the news media and tabloid journalism. The polls show Cardoza as the front-runner. On the GOP side, State Sen. Dick Montieth of Modesto looks like a solid primary winner...

☒ **21st CD** – In this new GOP congressional district which takes in Fresno and Tulare counties, our sources see a very tight finish to this primary between former Fresno Mayor Jim Patterson, Fresno area Assemblyman Mike Briggs and Tulare Co. businessman Devin Nunes, the 28-year-old who is being backed by powerful U.S. Rep. Bill Thomas(R-Bakersfield). The money is with Nunes, as is the Fresno BEE. Nunes has been on tv the longest, but the others are on as well. Independent expenditure groups are helping Patterson and bashing Briggs. Although some sources see Patterson as the frontrunner, others view this slugfest as a toss-up...

☒ **39th CD** – In this new Demo CD in Southeastern L.A. Co., it's a 3-way battle between attorney and labor leader Linda Sanchez (sister of U.S. Rep. Loretta); South Gate Councilman Hector De La Torre; and Assemblywoman Sally Havice. De La Torre has the best list of endorsements, Sanchez has the money, but Havice is a very familiar name to voters in this area. And one thing Calpeek sources say: even though Havice doesn't have the resources of Sanchez or even De La Torre, you can't count her out. Most sources rate the 39th CD primary as a toss-up...

CALIF. LEGISLATIVE CONTESTS

...In the past 6-7 weeks Calpeek has covered about 13-15 key legislative primaries. We'll give a brief update and prediction where possible for all these plus a few more that we didn't get to in previous issues. FYI: One thing which is driving these legislative races: **independent expenditure contributions**. The IEs are huge in some cases. Key IE groups include: CCPOA, CAUSE, JOBS PAC, CREPAC, the Calif. Alliance, and Opportunity PAC...

● **4th SD** – In this GOP primary, sources continue to rate Assemblyman Sam Aanestad, DDS, as a very slight favorite over fellow Assemblyman Dick Dickerson. Tons of IE money on both sides. And this race has gotten nasty in the past few days...

● **12th SD** – On the Demo side, former Assemblyman Rusty Areias is a favorite over Modesto attorney Armando Flores. On the GOP side, sources are beginning to shift toward Jeff Denham over former Assemblyman Peter Frusetta – but also note that Frusetta should have put this race away a long time ago. Both Denham and Frusetta have slates, but Denham has backing from most of the GOP State Senate leadership. Toss-up...

● **36th SD** – The IEs, fundraising, personal money and many of the key organizational endorsements are with Assemblywoman Charlene Zettel(R-Poway) in her primary battle with conservative Assemblyman Dennis Hollingsworth of Riverside. Sources say she's running a very aggressive campaign. Even with a heavy conservative vote, sources give an edge to Zettel...

● **2nd AD** – Sources rate Doug La Malfa as the GOPer to beat in this primary. Kight is a "textbook good candidate" and Redding is a great base, but LaMalfa has endorsements + resources...

● **8th AD** – In this open seat now held by Demo Helen Thomson, 3 solid Demos are vying to replace her: West Sacto Councilman Chris Cabaldon, with heavy Latino support; legislative consultant Steve Hardy, with backing from Burton/Perata + CSEA, CCPOA, COPS; and Yolo Co. Sup. Lois Wolk, supported by Thomas and CTA. Lots of IEs. Toss-up...

● **10th AD** – Another nasty GOP primary shootout. Dr. Alan Nakanishi of Lodi has good funding, solid conservative endorsements and the polling data looks good. Dan Kramer is solid too, as is Jon Bagatelos, but sources think they split the anti-Nakanishi vote. Nakanishi has ducked most of the debates (getting the name *No-Show Nakanishi*) and he's being pounded by Kramer and Bagatelos. Most sources see Nakanishi as a favorite, while some believe the race is too close to call...

● **13th AD** – S.F. Co. Sup. Mark Leno was ahead in his battle to replace Assemblywoman Carole Migden(D-SF), but now most sources rate this primary as a toss-up, with former S.F. Co. Sup. Harry Britt coming on strong. Mayor Willie Brown's candidate, former S.F. school board member Steve Phillips, has money, but sources see this battle as a Britt vs. Leno slugfest. Britt didn't raise much on his own, but some IEs have come in big for him. His big problem: he missed 6,019 votes while serving on the Board of Supes and Leno is pounding away. FYI: a new David Binder poll (for Leno) just came out of the field on 2/26 (400 likely voters, no push questions). It shows: Leno 38%, Britt 29%, Phillips 8%, others 4% and 20% undecided...

● **19th AD** – Most say that Gina Papan was the frontrunner, but this Demo primary has tightened. Papan is getting a tough race from So. S.F. Councilman Gene Mullin and from deep pocketed businessman Dave Pine, who has spent big bucks on tv. If Papan wins, it's because of name ID and gender. Lots of IEs. Sources mixed: some say it's a toss-up, others think it leans Papan...

● **26th AD** – A GOP blood bath between Steve Samuelian and Fresno businessman Larry Willey. Willey got the Fresno BEE

endorsement. Most rate this battle a toss-up, despite the many mistakes of Samuelian...

● **30th AD** – This seat belongs to Assemblyman Dean Florez, but he's giving it up to run for the State Senate. In the top tier are Wasco farmer Jim Crettol, who is supported by Sen. Jim Costa and many of Florez's supporters; and Nicole Parra, who works for U.S. Rep. Cal Dooley(D). The winner will be determined by GOTV. Most rate the contest as a toss-up. FYI: a poll by the Californian shows Parra 26%, Crettol and Hanford Councilwoman Dolores Gallegos at 8% each, Lemoore Mayor Ed Martin at 4%, with 54% undecided...

● **36th AD** – Perhaps the nastiest of all GOP primaries, this slugfest between Assemblyman Phil Wyman and Sharon Runner is over the line in terms of charges and counter-charges. No room to list them all. Some sources say Runner should win, but never count Wyman out. Others rate this battle as a toss-up...

● **39th AD** – All sources agree that San Fernando Mayor Cindy Montanez has a solid lead over legislative aide Yolanda Fuentes in this open Demo AD...

● **40th AD** – In this bloody Demo primary, sources still rate the race to replace Assemblyman Bob Hertzberg as a toss-up between legislative aides Lloyd Levine and Andrei Cherny...

● **46th AD** – In this open Demo AD, sources say the IEs for Fabian Nunez outweigh the IEs for Pedro Carrillo. Both are solid candidates, but the money is with Nunez. This has become a very nasty primary. Leans Nunez...

● **52nd AD** – In this open Demo AD, the advantage belongs to former Lt. Gov. Mervyn Dymally over Alex Gallardo-Rooker, who is a vice chair of the Calif. Demo Party and union vp. This AD may have a 65% Latino population, but in voter registration it's still solidly Black...

● **58th AD** – Can Ron Calderon(D) hold this seat for his family? It's now Tom Calderon's seat, but he's termed out. The key Demo challenger is Chuck Fuentes, COS to U.S. Rep. Grace Napolitano. Sources say Fuentes is moving up fast on Calderon, but he may have entered this primary a little late. Lots of IEs. Toss-up...

● **78th AD** – This open seat is very interesting because on the Demo side, San Diego Councilman George Stevens is regarded as the favorite, even though his politics are very conservative. In fact, if he's the nominee, he'll probably be to the right of GOP Mayor Shirley Horton of Bonita. Stevens' key competitors are Vince Hall and attorney Tim Cohelan. A big IE has been dumped in against Stevens (+ IE for Cohelan). Leans Stevens...

● **80th AD** – There are 4 GOPers and 3 Demos vying for this new seat in Riverside/Imperial area. A shoot-out on the Demo side between Cathedral City Councilman Greg Pettis and Joey Acuna Jr. A \$200,000 IE was just spent on Acuna's behalf.

Slight edge to Acuna. On the GOP side, State Sen. Jim Battin (R) is pushing legislative aide Bonnie Garcia, but she's got to battle La Quinta Mayor John Pena. Perhaps a slight edge to Garcia...

LOCAL CONTESTS

◆ **Measure W – El Toro** – A recent L.A. Times poll shows that 60% of all Orange Co. voters are now opposed to turning the former Marine Corps Air Station at El Toro into a large commercial airport. Among 582 likely voters (Feb. 14-18, by Baldassare Associates), Measure W is winning with 55%. Measure W would replace the airport with a regional park...

◆ **S.F. PD's Race** – Sources in S.F. say the contest between appointed Public Defender Kimiko Burton and Jeff Adachi is just too close to call. Adachi worked in the PD's office for 15 years, but was fired as the #2 person when Burton was appointed to the job. Burton has more resources, but Adachi isn't hurting. And he's picked up the endorsement of the S.F. Chronicle. If Burton's GOTV is on target, she wins...

◆ **L.A.'s 2nd Council District** – In this runoff special election, Demo Assemblyman Tony Cardenas is hoping to break a longtime jinx: with a few exceptions, L.A.-based members of the Assembly and State Senate who have returned to L.A. to run for office have been defeated. Cardenas' opponent is DreamWorks exec Wendy Greuel. In the primary, Cardenas finished with 47% vs. 42% for Greuel. In raw votes, Cardenas won by 534. The third place finisher, James Cordaro, has endorsed Greuel. He's a Goper and if the Republican vote in this special runoff is solid, it might be enough to push Greuel over the top. Regardless, Cardenas is still considered the front-runner. FYI: If Greuel wins, L.A. Council Pres. Alex Padilla could lose his job. If Cardenas wins, Assembly Speaker Herb Wesson (+ Gov. Davis) will have to scramble to pick up 5 GOP votes instead of 4 to pass the new budget. Not an easy task in either case...

◆ **Fresno DA's Race** – With incumbent Ed Hunt retiring, sources in Fresno Co. say a runoff is likely between DDA Jeff Hamilton and DDA Elizabeth Egan, who is running with Hunt's blessing. Egan has been on tv for about 2 weeks vs. a week for Hamilton. Chief DDA Dennis Cooper has the most experience, but lacks resources...

◆ **Oakland Mayor's Race** – Just haven't had the time or space to cover Mayor Jerry Brown's reelection against former Oakland Councilman Wilson Riles Jr. Calpeek sources say Brown wins with between 60-70%. Barnes, Mosher, Whitehurst & Partners (BMW) is Brown's consultant...

◆ **Ventura Co. DA's Race** – DDA Ron Bamieh has spent well over \$1 million in his effort to replace retiring DA Mike Bradbury. Bradbury + most of the rest of the Ventura Co. establishment are with Chief DDA Greg Totten, who has spent about \$400,000 thus far. Very tight race. Stay tuned...